

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT  
OF THE PROPOSED  
ROSCOMMON URBAN REALM IMPROVEMENT  
SCHEME (TOWN CENTRE WEST),  
COUNTY ROSCOMMON**

**ON BEHALF OF: ROSCOMMON COUNTY COUNCIL**

**ITM: 587041,764176 TO 587357,764657**

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## ABSTRACT

This assessment has been prepared on behalf of Roscommon County Council, to study the impact, if any, on the archaeological and historical resource of the proposed urban realm improvement scheme in Roscommon town (ITM 587041,764176 to 587357,764657). It was carried out by Jacqui Anderson of IAC Archaeology.

The proposed scheme is located in Roscommon town centre, following primarily St. Ciaran's Street in a roughly southwest to northeast orientation and including the northern extent of Lough Road. The proposed scheme is located partially within the zone of archaeological potential for the historic core of Roscommon town (RO039-043). In addition, a further nine archaeological sites are located within the 200m study area of the proposed scheme, including one redundant record.

A review of Excavations Bulletin (1970-2024) revealed that while the majority of previous archaeological investigations within the study area of the proposed scheme did not result in the discovery of archaeological features, the remains of the recorded prison (RO039-043003), c. 48m east of the proposed scheme were encountered during a number of investigations.

Analysis of the cartographic sources has proven the St. Ciaran's Street is relatively modern in date, having not been shown on the historic OS mapping. Neither examination of the available aerial imagery or a field inspection identified any features of archaeological potential within the proposed scheme.

The proposed scheme, for the most part, consists of the resurfacing and renewal of the existing urban town centre environment. No grounds work in greenfield areas are proposed. Ground disturbances associated with the installation of any required services or street furniture, have the potential to adversely impact on previously unrecorded archaeological feature or deposits that have the potential to survive beneath the current ground level within the zone of archaeological potential for the historic town. It is recommended that all excavations that exceed the existing road/pavement construction materials (c. 0.4m depth), be monitored by a suitably qualified archaeologist. If any features of archaeological potential are discovered during the course of the works further archaeological mitigation may be required, such as preservation in-situ or by record. Any further mitigation will require approval from the National Monuments Service of the DoHLGH.

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 GENERAL

The following report details an archaeological assessment undertaken in advance of a proposed urban realm improvement scheme in Roscommon town (Figure 1; ITM 587041,764176 to 587357,764657). This assessment has been carried out to ascertain the potential impact of the proposed development on the archaeological and historical resource that may exist within the area. It was undertaken by Jacqui Anderson of IAC Archaeology (IAC), on behalf of Roscommon County Council. The proposed scheme comprises St. Ciaran's Street and the northern extent of Lough Road.

The archaeological assessment involved a detailed study of the archaeological and historical background of the proposed development site and the surrounding area. This included information from the Record of Monuments and Places of County Roscommon, the topographical files within the National Museum of Ireland and all available cartographic and documentary sources for the area. A field inspection has also been carried out with the aim to identify any previously unrecorded features of archaeological or historical interest.

## 1.2 THE DEVELOPMENT

The proposed development will comprise a public realm improvement scheme as part of the Roscommon Town "putting the spokes back in the wheel project", which will include the following (Figure 2);

- Public realm and footpath improvement works on St Ciaran's Street
- Public realm and footpath improvement works on St Ciaran's park
- Alterations and improvements to bus set down and car parking adjacent to St Coman's Wood Primary School and the Sacred Heart Church
- Alterations to the junction of St Ciaran's Street and Convent Road
- Provision of new controlled and uncontrolled pedestrian crossings along St Ciaran's Street.

## 2 METHODOLOGY

A study area, defined as 200m from the boundary of the proposed scheme, was assessed to inform this report. Research was undertaken in two phases. The first phase comprised a paper survey of all available archaeological, historical and cartographic sources. The second phase involved a field inspection of the scheme.

### 2.1 PAPER SURVEY

- Record of Monuments and Places for County Roscommon;
- Sites and Monuments Record for County Roscommon;
- National Monuments in State Care Database;
- Preservation Orders List;
- Topographical files of the National Museum of Ireland;
- Cartographic and written sources relating to the study area;
- Roscommon County Development Plan (2022-2028);
- Roscommon Town Local Area Plan (2014-2020);
- Roscommon Town Draft Local Area Plan (2024-2030);
- Aerial photographs;
- Excavations Bulletin (1970-2024).

**Record of Monuments and Places (RMP)** is a list of archaeological sites known to the National Monuments Section, which are afforded legal protection under Section 12 of the 1994 National Monuments Act and are published as a record.

**Sites and Monuments Record (SMR)** holds documentary evidence and field inspections of all known archaeological sites and monuments. Some information is also held about archaeological sites and monuments whose precise location is not known e.g. only a site type and townland are recorded. These are known to the National Monuments Section as 'un-located sites' and cannot be afforded legal protection due to lack of locational information. As a result, these are omitted from the Record of Monuments and Places. SMR sites are also listed on a website maintained by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DoHLGH) – [www.archaeology.ie](http://www.archaeology.ie).

**National Monuments in State Care Database** is a list of all the National Monuments in State guardianship or ownership. Each is assigned a National Monument number whether in guardianship or ownership and has a brief description of the remains of each Monument. The Minister for the DoHLGH may acquire national monuments by agreement or by compulsory order. The state or local authority may assume guardianship of any national monument (other than dwellings). The owners of national monuments (other than dwellings) may also appoint the Minister or the local authority as guardian of that monument if the state or local authority agrees. Once the site is in ownership or guardianship of the state, it may not be interfered with without the written consent of the Minister.

**Preservation Orders List** contains information on Preservation Orders and/or Temporary Preservation Orders, which have been assigned to a site or sites. Sites deemed to be in danger of injury or destruction can be allocated Preservation Orders under the 1930 Act. Preservation Orders make any interference with the site illegal. Temporary Preservation Orders can be attached under the 1954 Act. These perform the same function as a Preservation Order but have a time limit of six months, after which the situation must be reviewed. Work may only be undertaken on or in the vicinity of sites under Preservation Orders with the written consent, and at the discretion, of the Minister.

**The topographical files of the National Museum of Ireland** are the national archive of all known finds recorded by the National Museum. This archive relates primarily to artefacts but also includes references to monuments and unique records of previous excavations. The find spots of artefacts are important sources of information on the discovery of sites of archaeological significance.

**Cartographic sources** are important in tracing land use development within the scheme as well as providing important topographical information on areas of archaeological potential and the development of buildings. Cartographic analysis of all relevant maps has been made to identify any topographical anomalies or structures that no longer remain within the landscape.

**Documentary sources** were consulted to gain background information on the archaeological and cultural heritage landscape of the proposed scheme.

**Development Plans** contain a catalogue of all the Protected Structures and archaeological sites within the county. The Roscommon County Development Plan (2022-2028) and the Roscommon Town Local Area Plan (2014-2020) were consulted to obtain information on cultural heritage sites in and within the immediate vicinity of the proposed scheme. The Roscommon Town Draft Local Area Plan (2024-2030) was also consulted as part of this assessment.

**Aerial photographic coverage** is an important source of information regarding the precise location of sites and their extent. It also provides initial information on the terrain and its likely potential for archaeology. A number of sources were consulted including aerial photographs held by the Ordnance Survey and Google Earth.

**Excavations Bulletin** is a summary publication that has been produced every year since 1970. This summarises every archaeological excavation that has taken place in Ireland during that year up until 2010 and since 1987 has been edited by Isabel Bennett. This information is vital when examining the archaeological content of any area, which may not have been recorded under the SMR and RMP files. This information is also available online ([www.excavations.ie](http://www.excavations.ie)) from 1970–2024.

## **2.2 FIELD INSPECTION**

Field inspection is necessary to determine the extent and nature of archaeological and historical remains, and can also lead to the identification of previously



unrecorded or suspected sites and portable finds through topographical observation and local information.

The archaeological field inspection entailed -

- Walking the proposed development and its immediate environs.
- Noting and recording the terrain type and land usage.
- Noting and recording the presence of features of archaeological or historical significance.
- Verifying the extent and condition of any recorded sites.
- Visually investigating any suspect landscape anomalies to determine the possibility of their being anthropogenic in origin.

## **3 RESULTS OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT**

### **3.1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

The proposed scheme is located in Roscommon town centre, following primarily St. Ciaran's Street in a roughly southwest to northeast orientation and including the northern extent of Lough Road.

The proposed scheme is located partially within the zone of archaeological potential for the historic core of Roscommon town (RO039-043). In addition, a further nine archaeological sites are located within the 200m study area of the proposed scheme, including one redundant record.

#### **3.1.1 Prehistoric Period**

##### **Mesolithic Period (c. 8000–4000 BC)**

Although possible evidence of Upper Palaeolithic human activity has been identified in the southwest of Ireland (Dowd and Carden 2016), the Mesolithic period is the earliest time for which there is clear evidence of prehistoric activity on the island of Ireland as a whole. During this period people hunted, foraged and gathered food and appear to have had a mobile lifestyle. The most common evidence indicative of Mesolithic activity at a site comprises of scatters of worked flint material; a by-product from the production of flint implements or rubbish middens consisting largely of shells (Stout and Stout 1997). The latter are commonly discovered in coastal regions or at the edge of lakes. Although it is likely that Lough Ree (c. 8km to the east) was used during this period as a food resource, there is no recorded evidence of Mesolithic activity within the vicinity of the proposed scheme.

##### **Neolithic Period (c. 4000–2500 BC)**

During the Neolithic period communities adopted agriculture as a way of life, though hunting, fishing and gathering continued to contribute to the Neolithic diet. This transition was accompanied by major social change. Agriculture demanded an altering of the physical landscape; forests were rapidly cleared and field boundaries constructed but it allowed the development of more permanent settlements as the need to migrate to exploit seasonal natural resources was no longer a key constraint on settlement. There was a greater concern for territory, which contributed to the emergence of the megalithic tomb tradition, large monumental stone burial sites, which are characteristic of the period. There are no recorded Neolithic sites within the vicinity of the proposed scheme, though the area would have continued to be attractive to settlers during this period.

##### **Bronze Age (c. 2500–800 BC)**

This period is marked by the use of metal for the first time. As with the transition from Mesolithic to Neolithic, the transition into the early Bronze Age was accompanied by changes in society. Megalithic tombs were replaced in favour of individual, subterranean cist or pit burials that were either in isolation or in small cemeteries.

These burials contained inhumed or cremated remains and were often, but not always, accompanied by a pottery vessel.

Over 7,000 burnt mounds or *fulacht fia* sites have been recorded in the country and c. 1,500 examples excavated, making them the most common prehistoric monument in Ireland (Waddell 2022, 164). Dating evidence from a growing number of burnt mounds, suggests activities resulting in burnt mounds were being carried over a span of 3,500 years in Ireland, the Bronze Age has long been believed to have seen the peak of this activity (Hawkes 2018). They are typically located in areas where there is a readily available water source, often in proximity to a river or stream or in places with a high-water table. In the field burnt mounds may be identified as charcoal-rich mounds or spreads of heat shattered stones, however, in many cases, the sites have been disturbed by later agricultural activity and are no longer visible on the field surface. Nevertheless, even disturbed spreads of burnt mound material often preserve the underlying associated features, such as troughs, pits and gullies, intact. Evidence for Bronze Age activity in the wider area includes the domestic *fulacht fia* (RO039-094) recorded in Cloonybeirne c. 1.1km northeast of the proposed scheme.

There are no recorded Bronze Age sites within the study area of the proposed scheme, although a large cluster of funerary monuments (barrows and ring ditches) are recorded in Carrownabrickna townland c. 2.7km to the northwest, which indicates that Bronze Age communities were active in the wider region.

### **Iron Age (c. 800 BC–AD 500)**

There is increasing evidence for Iron Age settlement and activity in recent years as a result of development-led excavations as well as projects such as Late Iron Age and Roman Ireland (Cahill Wilson 2014). Yet this period is distinguishable from the rather rich remains of the preceding Bronze Age and subsequent early medieval period, by a relative paucity within the current archaeological record. The Iron Age in Ireland is problematic for archaeologists as few artefacts dating exclusively to this period have been found and without extensive excavation it cannot be determined whether several monument types, such as ring-barrows or standing stones, date to the late Bronze Age or Iron Age. It is likely that there was significant continuity in the Iron Age, with earlier monuments re-used in many cases. There are no known monuments in the vicinity of the proposed scheme that would suggest an active presence of Iron Age communities in this area.

### **3.1.2 Early Medieval Period (c. AD 500–1100)**

The early medieval period is depicted in the surviving sources as entirely rural characterised by the basic territorial unit known as *túath*. Byrne (1973) estimates that there were at least 150 kings in Ireland at any given time during this period, each ruling over his own *túath*. The ringfort or rath is considered to be the most common indicator of settlement during the early medieval period (Stout 1997). One of the most recent studies of early medieval settlement enclosures has suggested that there is potential for at least 60,000 such sites to have existed on the island (O’Sullivan et al. 2014, 49). Ringforts were often constructed to protect rural farmsteads and are usually defined as a broadly circular enclosure delineated by a bank and ditch.

Ringforts can be divided into three broad categories – univallate sites, with one bank or ditch; multivallate sites with as many as four levels of enclosing features and platform or raised ringforts, where the interior of the ringfort has been built up. These enclosed sites were intimately connected to the division of land and the status of the occupant.

The name Roscommon is derived from Coman mac Faelchon, the man attributed with establishing a monastery (RO039-043006) in the area during the 6th century. The monastery site lies c. 310m to the east of the proposed scheme where it runs along Church Street. The woods near the monastery became known as Saint Comán's Wood (Ros Comáin). St Comán, a disciple of St Finnian of Clonard, died in AD 549. The 'law of St Comán' was proclaimed over much of Connaught in AD 771, 779 and 792. The monastery may have been raided by the Vikings in AD 807 (Annals of Ulster) and it was burnt in AD 823 and again in AD 1134 (SMR file).

### **3.1.3 Medieval Period (c. AD 1100–1600)**

The ruins of Roscommon Castle (RO039-043001, Nat. Mon. 181) are located on a hillside just outside the town, c. 380m north of the proposed scheme in Cloonabrackna townland. The castle is quadrangular in shape and it had four corner D-shaped towers and twin towers at its entrance gateway, one of which still retains its immensely sturdy vaulted roof. The entire castle was enclosed by a curtain wall. It was built in 1269 by Robert de Ufford, Justiciar of Ireland, on lands he had seized from the Augustinian Priory. It was besieged by Connacht King Aodh O'Connor in 1272. Eight years later it was again in the hands of an English garrison and fully repaired.

By 1340 the O'Connors regained possession of the castle and, except for a few brief intermissions, they held it for two centuries until 1569, when Sir Henry Sidney, Lord Deputy seized it. It was granted to Sir Nicholas Malbie, Elizabethan Governor of Connaught, in 1578. Two years later the interior was remodelled and large mullioned windows were inserted in the towers and curtain walls. Again, in 1641 the Parliamentarian faction gained it until Confederate Catholics under Preston captured it in 1645. It remained in Irish hands until 1652 when it was partially destroyed by Cromwellian "Ironsides" under Commissary Reynolds, who had all the fortifications dismantled. It was finally burned down in 1690, and, from the closing years of the 17th century, it gradually fell into decay. A symmetrical moat some distance from the curtain walls surrounded the entire castle and safeguarded it.

The monastery at Roscommon (RO039-043006) and its abbots are mentioned in documentary sources occasionally into the 12th century. The cross of Cong, containing a fragment of the true cross, was made for this monastery in 1123 at the behest of Turough O'Connor. The monastery was nominated as a diocesan centre at Kells in 1152, but lost this place to Elphin (RO016-127002) in 1170, by which time the monastery at Roscommon had become an Augustinian house (SMR file). The Augustinian Rule was adopted in c. 1140, and the monastery continued as Augustinian until the Dissolution. The name may have changed to St. Mary's in the 13th century and it may have also had a resident community of nuns at this time. It was plundered by the de Burgos in 1204 and 1260, and was burnt in 1235, 1247 and

1360 (ibid.). The Augustinian priory was granted the right to hold a market in 1282, but its location of this market is currently unknown.

A Dominican friary (RO039-055001) was established by Felimid O'Connor in 1253, c. 381m southeast of the proposed scheme in Ballypheasan townland. It was burned in 1270 and struck by lightning in 1308. By 1445, it was in disrepair when an indulgence was granted to restore its fabric and in 1578 it was granted to Sir Nicholas Malby. In 1615 it was granted to Francis Viscount Valentia, but was described as in ruins in 1612 (SMR file).

It is not known if the town was surrounded by a defensive wall during the medieval period. Thomas (1992) suggests that while a town wall may not have been present earthen defences or a town ditch may have present as early as 1299. Sub-surface structural remains recorded during archaeological investigations at the southern end of Main Street, represent the medieval gatehouse (RO039-043004) which was partially extant until the 19th century, c. 220m east of the proposed scheme. The recorded remains consisted of eastern and western wall footings of the gatehouse, as well as a number of additional post-medieval features, including a culvert, running north-south along the existing roadway. These identified foundations of the gatehouse partially extend within the northern limit proposed scheme boundary. The location of the gatehouse remains is now marked by an engraved limestone slab on both eastern and western side of Main Street, set within the existing street surface.

#### **3.1.4 Post-Medieval Period (AD 1600–1800)**

A map of Roscommon town by Nicholas Malby (c. 1580) shows the town house and market place (SMR file). A map of 1736 by Francis Plunket shows the market house (RO039-043015) as a small building with a domed roof in the market place to the east of the proposed scheme. The building (RO039-043015) had collapsed in 1719, but it was rebuilt after 1762 by George and John Ensor as a rectangular and arcaded tholsel of six bays by three bays with the session rooms of the Grand Jury overhead (ibid.).

In 1836, the market house became the Roman Catholic Church. It was re-designed by J. O'Farrell who turned it into a one storey building, built up the arcades, expanded the porch with a tower and cupola overhead. This work was completed by 1844 and the building continued as a church until 1903 when the church of the Sacred Heart, designed by Walter Doolin, was opened. Throughout the 20th century the old Session House served as a town hall, called the Harrison Hall after a popular physician. In the late 1970s, it was sold to the Bank of Ireland who opened it as a branch in 1980 (SMR file).

The prison (RO039-043013) in Roscommon town, located 23m northeast of the proposed scheme, was built in the 1740s to the designs of Richard Cassels. Following the prisons replacement with a new jail (RO039-043003), c. 48m east of the proposed scheme, the old building functioned as an asylum (Weld 1832) from 1820 to 1833. It later served as a market house and today has been converted for commercial and residential use.

Some 17th century references to Roscommon Camp suggest that there were earthwork defences, perhaps occupying the high ground later occupied by the new jail (RO039-043003), c. 48m east of the proposed scheme. The jail was commissioned in 1814 and had been built by 1832 to a design by Sir Richard Morrison (1767-1849), with construction undertaken by Thomas Colbourne and Richard Richards, architects and builders.

The new jail cost £22,252 and in the 1832 Statistical Survey of County Roscommon, Isaac Weld, describes the gaol as 'being built on a semi-circular plan, consisting of eight divisions, with appropriate yards and workrooms, a separate hospital and chapel and ninety-one sleeping cells. The prison was closed in 1886 and in 1887 it came into use as a RIC barracks. It was disused from 1921 to 1925 but was taken over by the An Garda Síochána (until 1948) before it was largely demolished. Excavation revealed features from the time it was in use as a prison (Bennett 2003:1598, Licence Ref. 03E1245).

### **3.2 SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELDWORK**

A review of the Excavations Bulletin (1970–2024) has revealed that a number of previous archaeological investigations have taken place within the study area of the proposed scheme.

The yard of the old gaol (RO039-043013) c. 23m northeast of the proposed scheme was tested in 1997 (Licence Ref. 97E0419, Bennett 1997:458). This identified an area of cobbling in the western portion of the yard that contained Buckley Ware, beneath this surface an Irish halfpenny of George II, dated 1737, was found. The entire outline of the 18th century cell and latrine blocks were uncovered to the rear of the remnants of the upstanding administration block and façade of the jail. These blocks obliterated the trace of any earlier structures at the site.

The site of the new gaol (RO039-043003), c. 48m east of the proposed scheme, was tested in 2002 (Licence Ref. 02E1555, Bennett 2002:1623). This confirmed that the 19th century rotunda structure survived and aligned with the structure depicted in the first edition OS map. Following on from this programme of testing four cuttings were opened up at the site and encountered the front and rear walls of the main cellblock, individual cells that had been converted into rooms of a barracks, stone flags (limestone and sandstone) or clay and mortar floor surfaces, along with a number of bullet casings and two copper-alloy RIC badges dating to the late 19th or early 20th century. Further excavation in 2008 exposed the Male and Female Hospitals at the site, more of the principal cell block and a passage linking the former governor's residence to the chapel (Licence Ref. 03E1245 ext., Bennett 2008:1043).

Further works were carried out at the site of the new gaol (RO039-043003) under licence 11E0439 ext. Archaeological monitoring was carried out at two sites, Site 1 and Site 2. Fragmentary remains of the stone walls of the gaol were identified at Site 1, in addition to a number of drainage features. Nothing of archaeological significance was identified at Site 2 (Bennett 2014:110).

A number of archaeological investigations in the study area did not identify features of archaeological significance and these are listed in Table 1 below.

**TABLE 1:** List of excavations of no archaeological significance

LICENCE REF.:	LOCATION	REFERENCE	DISTANCE TO SCHEME
18E0627	Roscommon Main Drainage	Bennett 2018:675	Unclear
03E0741	Mercy Convent, Convent Road	Bennett 2003:1597	c. 62m southwest
00E0338	Abbey Street	Bennett 2001:1122	c. 81m east
06E1185	16 Henry Street	Bennett 2006:1754	c. 200m southeast
11E0439	Ardnanagh	Bennett 2011:516	c. 48m east
04E1143	Lanesborough Street	Bennett 2004:1479	c. 93m east-northeast
00E0339	Abbey Street	Bennett 2000:1110	c. 91m east

### 3.3 CARTOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

#### **Sir William Petty, Down Survey Map, County Roscommon, c. 1654-6**

This map annotates the town of Roscommon and depicts the abbey (RO039-043006) to the south of the town and the castle (RO039-043001) to the north. There are no other features depicted.

#### **First Edition Ordnance Survey Map, 1838, scale 1:10,560 (Figure 3)**

This is the first accurate historic mapping coverage of the area containing the proposed scheme. Both the abbey (RO039-043006) and the castle (RO039-043001) from the Down Survey are still depicted and the remnants of an avenue (RO039-043018) linking the castle to the town are also shown. The Old Gaol (RO039-043013) lies at the end of this avenue, 23m northeast of the proposed scheme. The New Gaol (RO039-043003) and court house are depicted to the immediate east of the proposed scheme. St. Ciaran's Street has not been developed by this time and the proposed scheme traverses a number of undeveloped fields to the west of the Gaol.

A square structure, the former Market House (RO039-043015), is annotated as the R.C. Chapel within the centre of the Market Place, known today as the Square. A number of structures, including a brewery, are shown fronting onto the Main Street and Market Place with rear plots that may represent the remains of former medieval burgage plots.

#### **Ordnance Survey Map, 1892, scale 1:2,500 (Figure 4)**

By the time of this map, St. Ciaran's Street is not shown. At the northern extent of the proposed scheme, a triangular area is labelled as a 'Fair Green'. The R.C. Chapel (RO039-043015) has been redesigned and includes a porch with a tower and cupola overhead to the south and a sacristy to the north. The Old Gaol (RO039-043013) is no longer annotated; however, the structure has been developed.

The New Gaol (RO039-043003) and court house are depicted to the immediate east of the proposed scheme once more. To the southwest of the proposed scheme, a convent and an industrial school for girls have been constructed south of what is now Convent Road.

### **Ordnance Survey Map, 1927, scale 1:10,560**

By the time of this map, the New Gaol (RO039-043003) is now in use as a Military Barracks. The Sacred Heart Church has been constructed to the immediate east of the proposed scheme, along with a convent school. At the northern end of the scheme, the Fair Green is shown once more, with a Football ground to the immediate south.

## **3.4 DEVELOPMENT PLANS**

The Roscommon County Development Plan (2022-2028), Roscommon Town Local Area Plan (2014-2020) and Roscommon Town Draft Local Area Plan (2024-2030) all recognise the statutory protection afforded to all Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) sites under the National Monuments Legislation (1930–2014). The development plan lists a number of aims and objectives in relation to archaeological heritage (Appendix 2).

The proposed scheme is located partially within the zone of archaeological potential for the historic core of Roscommon town (RO039-043). There are a further nine archaeological sites within 200m of the proposed scheme, including one redundant record (Table 2; Figure 1; Appendix 1). A number of the recorded monuments within the study area of the proposed scheme (RO039-043025, RO039-043024, RO039-043029) originated from elsewhere in county Roscommon and are displayed in the Roscommon County Museum, which occupies the location of the Old Presbyterian Church, c. 37m east of the proposed scheme.

None of the recorded monuments in the study area are listed as National Monuments in State Care or are subject to Preservation Orders.

**TABLE 2:** Recorded archaeological sites in proximity to the study area

<b>RMP NO.</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>	<b>CLASSIFICATION</b>	<b>DISTANCE</b>
RO039-043	Ardnanagh, Ballypheasan, Cloonbrackna ,Loughnaneane	Historic town	Proposed scheme is within Zone of Archaeological Potential
RO039-043013	Ballypheasan	Prison	23m northeast
RO039-043002	Ballypheasan, Ardnanagh	Redundant record	36m east
RO039-043025	Ardnanagh	Sheela-na-gig (present location)	38m east
RO039-043024	Ardnanagh	Inscribed slab (present location)	42m east
RO039-043029	Ardeash	Stoup (present location)	42m east
RO039-043003	Ardnanagh,	Prison	48m east



RMP NO.	LOCATION	CLASSIFICATION	DISTANCE
	Ballypheasan		
RO039-043012	Ardnanagh	Architectural fragment	48m east
RO039-043026	Ardnanagh	Burial	60m south
RO039-043015	Ballypheasan	Market-house	61m east

### 3.5 TOPOGRAPHICAL FILES OF THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF IRELAND

Information on artefact finds from the study area in County Roscommon has been recorded by the National Museum of Ireland since the late 18th century. Location information relating to these finds is important in establishing prehistoric and historic activity in the study area. Only one record is listed in the Topographical Files of the NMI for study area of the proposed scheme (see below).

MUSEUM NO	-
TOWNLAND	Ballypheasan
PARISH	Roscommon
BARONY	Ballintober
FIND	Inscribed Slabs
FIND PLACE	St. Comman's Church Site
DESCRIPTION	Decorated and inscribed slabs. One was a grave slab with Romanesque type decoration, another had a plain cross-in-circle motif, plus a number of later grave stones with Passion symbols. The cemetery is on the site of the early medieval monastery founded by St. Comman.
REFERENCE	NMI Topographical Files

### 3.6 AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

The earliest available aerial photography of Roscommon town dates to 1964 (CUCAP No. AJN075). While this imagery confirms the street layout of the town had been well established by this time (also confirmed by the historic mapping), the proposed scheme is not shown in sufficient detail to allow analysis. It appears the St. Ciaran's Street has not yet been fully developed by this time.

Inspection of the aerial photographic coverage of the proposed scheme held by the Ordnance Survey (1995–2013), Google Earth (2006–2023), Bing Maps, and Apple Maps revealed that the proposed scheme includes primarily established roads and car parking areas. Nothing of archaeological significance could be identified in the aerial imagery, given the urban nature of the proposed scheme.

### 3.7 FIELD INSPECTION

The field inspection sought to assess the site, its previous and current land use, the topography and any additional information relevant to the report. During the course of the field investigation the proposed development site and its immediate surrounding environs were inspected (Figure 1). The proposed scheme comprises primarily St. Ciaran's Street, two car parking areas and a small section of Lough Road.

St. Ciaran's Street extends north from Convent Road, and is surfaced in modern tarmacadam (Plate 1). A primary school lies to the immediate west of this road, enclosed by a plinth wall and railing. A car park associated with this school is also included in the proposed scheme redline (Plate 2). St. Ciaran's Street turns briefly westwards before continuing in a northeast direction past the Sacred Heart Church. The second larger car parking area is located to the immediate south of the church (Plate 3). The church is contained within a railed churchyard, there is no evidence of burial within the churchyard (Plate 4).

Further north along St. Ciaran's Street, the site of the former new gaol (RO039-043003) is now occupied by a modern building, which houses the offices of Roscommon County Council (Plate 5).

Lough Road is a small local road with modern surfacing, extending in a west-northwest direction from St. Ciaran's Street (Plate 6). To the immediate north of Lough Road, is a triangular open space, which represents the former Fairgreen shown on the historic OS mapping, although it is reduced in size.

Nothing of archaeological significance was identified during the field inspection.

## 4 CONCLUSIONS

The proposed scheme comprises St. Ciaran's Street and a small section of the northern extent of Lough Road, in Roscommon Town, County Roscommon. The proposed scheme is located partially within the zone of archaeological potential for the historic core of Roscommon town (RO039-043), as shown on Figure 1. There are a further nine archaeological sites within 200m of the proposed scheme, including one redundant record.

The yard of the old gaol (RO039-043013) c. 23m northeast of the proposed scheme was archaeologically tested in 1997 (Licence Ref. 97E0419, Bennett 1997:458). This identified an area of cobbling in the western portion of the yard that contained Buckley Ware, beneath this surface an Irish halfpenny of George II, dated 1737, was found. The entire outline of the 18th century cell and latrine blocks were uncovered to the rear of the remnants of the upstanding administration block and façade of the jail. These blocks obliterated the trace of any earlier structures at the site.

The site of the new gaol (RO039-043003), c. 48m east of the proposed scheme, was subject to a number of archaeological investigations during which structural remains of the prison were recorded (Licence Ref. 02E1555, Bennett 2002:1623, Licence Ref. 03E1245 ext., Bennett 2008:1043, Licence Ref. 11E0439 ext. Bennett 2014:110).

A review of the historic mapping confirmed that St. Ciaran's Street is a relatively modern routeway within Roscommon town, having not been depicted on the historic mapping, up until 1927. The aerial imagery did not reveal any features of archaeological potential. A field inspection confirmed that the proposed scheme is confined to established modern roadways, and two car parking areas adjacent to St. Ciaran's Street. Nothing of archaeological potential was identified during the field inspection and it is clear that the area has been subject to development over the recent years.

## 5 IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND MITIGATION STRATEGY

Impacts can be identified from detailed information about a project, the nature of the area affected and the range of archaeological resources potentially affected. Archaeological sites can be affected adversely in a number of ways: disturbance by excavation, topsoil stripping; disturbance by vehicles working in unsuitable conditions; and burial of sites, limiting access for future archaeological investigation. Upstanding archaeology can be affected adversely by direct damage or destruction arising from development, from inadvertent damage arising from vibration, undermining etc. and also by indirect impacts to a building's visual setting, view or curtilage.

### 5.1 IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- The proposed scheme, for the most part, consists of the resurfacing and renewal of the existing urban town centre environment. However, ground disturbances associated with the installation of any required services or street furniture, have the potential to adversely impact on previously unrecorded archaeological feature or deposits that have the potential to survive beneath the current ground level within the zone of archaeological potential associated with the historic town (RO039-043).

### 5.2 MITIGATION

- It is recommended that all excavations that exceed the existing road/pavement construction materials (c. 0.4m depth), be monitored by a suitably qualified archaeologist, within the zone of archaeological potential. If any features of archaeological potential are discovered during the course of the works further archaeological mitigation may be required, such as preservation in-situ or by record. Any further mitigation will require approval from the National Monuments Service of the DoHLGH.

*It is the developer's responsibility to ensure full provision is made available for the resolution of any archaeological remains, both on site and during the post excavation process, should that be deemed the appropriate manner in which to proceed.*

**Please note that all recommendations are subject to approval by the National Monuments Service of the Heritage and Planning Division, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.**

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## **CARTOGRAPHIC SOURCES**

Sir William Petty, Down Survey Map, County Roscommon, c. 1654-6  
Ordnance Survey maps of County Roscommon, 1838-1927

## **ELECTRONIC SOURCES**

[www.excavations.ie](http://www.excavations.ie) – Summary of archaeological excavation from 1970-2024.  
[www.archaeology.ie](http://www.archaeology.ie) – DoHLGH website listing all SMR/RMP sites.  
[www.heritagemaps.ie](http://www.heritagemaps.ie) – The Heritage Council web-based spatial data viewer which focuses on the built, cultural and natural heritage.  
[www.googleearth.com](http://www.googleearth.com) – Satellite imagery of the proposed scheme.  
[www.bing.com](http://www.bing.com) – Satellite imagery of the proposed scheme.  
[www.logainm.ie](http://www.logainm.ie) – Placenames Database of Ireland launched by *Fiontar agus Scoil na Gaelige* and the DoHLGH.  
[www.cambridgeairphotos.com](http://www.cambridgeairphotos.com) - The Cambridge University Collection of Aerial Photography (CUCAP) dating from 1947.

## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX 1 SMR/RMP SITES WITHIN THE STUDY AREA

<b>SMR NO.</b>	RO039-043
<b>RMP STATUS</b>	Scheduled for inclusion in the next revision of the RMP
<b>TOWNLAND</b>	Ardnanagh, Ballypheasan, Cloonbrackna ,Loughnaneane
<b>PARISH</b>	Roscommon
<b>BARONY</b>	Ballintober South
<b>I.T.M.</b>	587419,764537
<b>CLASSIFICATION</b>	Historic town
<b>DIST. FROM DEVELOPMENT</b>	Proposed scheme within Zone of Archaeological Potential
<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<p>A monastery (RO039-0430006-) was founded here by St Comán, who died in AD 747. The monastery and its abbots are mentioned occasionally into the 12th century. It was attacked by Vikings in 807 and 823, and in 1050 its round tower was destroyed. The cross of Cong, containing a fragment of the true cross, was made for this monastery in 1123 at the behest of Turlough O'Connor (O Rian and Murray 2005). The monastery was nominated as a diocesan centre at Kells in 1152, but lost this place to Elphin (RO016-127002-) in 1170, by which time the monastery at Roscommn had become an Augustinian house. The town is situated around a low hill, the abbey on its S-facing side, the castle at the foot of the N-facing slope.</p> <p>Roscommon was probably the only town founded by an Irish lord, Turlough O'Connor, although not formally chartered, and the Anglo-Normans conducted raids against it in 1235 and 1260. The town appears to have been defended from the beginning which can be associated with the building of the castle from 1268. However, no walls survive and their course is unknown, but a gate (RO039-043004-) at the S end of Main St. is known from as late as the early 19th century. There are no known grants of murage, but there are references to burgages and a north gate in 1299 and a charter was confirmed in 1310-11. A Dominican friary (RO039-055---) was founded to the S of the town in 1253. The castle (RO039-043001-) was begun by the Crown in 1268 to resist O'Connor aggression, and a settlement, called the 'King's town' developed in relation to it.</p> <p>The castle and town were captured by Ruairi O'Connor in 1315 and the castle was held by O'Connor Don until 1566, but the town declined rapidly from the early 14th century. The town was probably defunct in 1577, when the castle and the lands of the dissolved monasteries were leased to Sir Nicholas Malby. This was transformed into a grant in 1579. Malby converted the castle into a fortified house (RO039-043010-), but his proposal of a new town to the S of the castle was probably never built. After the burning of the town in 1596 and 1599, its focus probably moved to the Market Place and Main St. The town was incorporated in 1613, returning two MPs to the Irish Parliament until 1800, and supported the</p>

	Parliament side in the 1640s but in 1659 its population was only 94. The site of the early monastery and Augustinian priory (RO039-042006-) is around Church St. and the town probably developed to the N of this. The Castle (RO039-043001-) is c. 1km to the N, and the Dominican friary (RO039-055001-) is c. 500m to the S. A crucifixion plaque (RO039-043005-) was until lately in a garden off Chapel Lane where it is now re-erected, and some 17th century architectural fragments (RO039-043012-) are at the Roscommon County Museum. Archaeological excavations have yet to produce any evidence of settlement (Excavations 1997, 153-4; 1998, 178; 1999, 271; 2000; 2001, 355-6; 2002, 456-8; 2003, 425-9; 2004, 381-2; 2005, 327-8; 2006, 463-5; 2007, 416-7), apart from one lime-kiln (RO039-043019-) on the E side of Main St which may be post-medieval (Carey 2004c), and a 17th century pit (RO039-043020-). (Bradley and Dunne 1988a, 85-111; Thomas, 1992, vol. 2, 186-9; Doran 2005, 394)
<b>REFERENCE</b>	www.archaeology.ie/ SMR file

<b>SMR NO.</b>	RO039-043013
<b>RMP STATUS</b>	Scheduled for inclusion in the next revision of the RMP
<b>TOWNLAND</b>	Ballypheasan
<b>PARISH</b>	Roscommon
<b>BARONY</b>	Ballintober South
<b>I.T.M.</b>	587374,764673
<b>CLASSIFICATION</b>	Prison
<b>DIST. FROM DEVELOPMENT</b>	23m northeast
<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	On top of a broad hill within Roscommon town. A tower of two storeys but of unknown function is marked here on a map of 1736 by Francis Plunket (copy in Roscommon County Museum). The jail was reputedly designed by Richard Cassels, was built by 1745, and had the distinction of employing a hangwoman, lady Betty. It closed as a jail c. 1819 when the new jail (RO039-043003-) was built. From 1820 until 1833 it became an asylum (Weld 1832, 423-5). Thereafter it served as a market house, but by 1918 it had been converted into a dwelling called Tudor House. In 1985 most of the cell block, which had three storeys, was demolished, and only the administrative block of four storeys attached to its S survives. Excavation (97E0419) revealed no evidence of an earlier structure but the outline of the cell block (ext. dims c. 14m N-S; 10.5m E-W) with 8 cells (dims c. 2.5m x 2.5m) in all, four on either side of a N-S corridor (Wth 1.3m) was uncovered. There was a latrine chute at N with a drain running off to the NW. (Higgins 1998a)
<b>REFERENCE</b>	www.archaeology.ie/ SMR file

<b>SMR NO.</b>	RO039-043002
<b>RMP STATUS</b>	Not scheduled for inclusion in the next revision of the RMP
<b>TOWNLAND</b>	Ardnanagh, Ballypheasan
<b>PARISH</b>	Roscommon
<b>BARONY</b>	Ballintober South



<b>I.T.M.</b>	587390,764637
<b>CLASSIFICATION</b>	Redundant record
<b>DIST. FROM DEVELOPMENT</b>	36m east
<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	The Augustinian priory (RO039-043006-) was granted the right to hold a market in 1282 (Cal. doc. Ire., vol. 2, No. 2008), but its location is unknown. The present Market Place began to develop in the 17th century when the focus of the town moved here from the Church St. area. Market is no longer a classification used by the Archaeological Survey of Ireland.
<b>REFERENCE</b>	<a href="http://www.archaeology.ie/">www.archaeology.ie/</a> SMR file

<b>SMR NO.</b>	RO039-043025
<b>RMP STATUS</b>	Scheduled for inclusion in the next revision of the RMP
<b>TOWNLAND</b>	Ardnanagh
<b>PARISH</b>	Roscommon
<b>BARONY</b>	Ballintober South
<b>I.T.M.</b>	587349,764605
<b>CLASSIFICATION</b>	Sheela-na-gig (present location)
<b>DIST. FROM DEVELOPMENT</b>	38m east
<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	A Sheela-na-gig carved in low relief on a voussoir from an arch (RO045-077005-) (dims. H 0.44m; Wth 0.1-0.4m; T 0.3m) at Rahara church (RO045-077001-) is now in Roscommon County Museum. (Siggins 1990, 46-7; Freitag 2004, 139)
<b>REFERENCE</b>	<a href="http://www.archaeology.ie/">www.archaeology.ie/</a> SMR file

<b>SMR NO.</b>	RO039-043024
<b>RMP STATUS</b>	Scheduled for inclusion in the next revision of the RMP
<b>TOWNLAND</b>	Ardnanagh
<b>PARISH</b>	Roscommon
<b>BARONY</b>	Ballintober South
<b>I.T.M.</b>	587349,764605
<b>CLASSIFICATION</b>	Inscribed slab (present location)
<b>DIST. FROM DEVELOPMENT</b>	42m east
<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	An inscribed slab (dims 0.93m x 0.41-0.65m; T 0.06-0.15m) (RO039-043009-) from the site of St Colman's church (RO039-043006-) dating from the 9th century and asking for a blessing on Ioseph is now in the Roscommon County Museum. (Barton 1996; Siggins 1996a)
<b>REFERENCE</b>	<a href="http://www.archaeology.ie/">www.archaeology.ie/</a> SMR file

<b>SMR NO.</b>	RO039-043029
<b>RMP STATUS</b>	Scheduled for inclusion in the next revision of the RMP
<b>TOWNLAND</b>	Ardeash

<b>PARISH</b>	Ardcarn
<b>BARONY</b>	Boyle
<b>I.T.M.</b>	587349,764605
<b>CLASSIFICATION</b>	Stoup (present location)
<b>DIST. FROM DEVELOPMENT</b>	42m east
<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	A damaged limestone stoup (diam. c. 0.35m) with a carved head on one side (Siggins 1990, 46-7), which probably came from Rahara church (RO045-077001-) c. 1km to S, but which had been kept at Toberlargin holy well (RO045-075001-), is now in the Roscommon County Museum. The head is one of an original three that would have represented the Holy Trinity (Siggins 2016).
<b>REFERENCE</b>	www.archaeology.ie/ SMR file

<b>SMR NO.</b>	RO039-043003
<b>RMP STATUS</b>	Scheduled for inclusion in the next revision of the RMP
<b>TOWNLAND</b>	Ardnagh, Ballypheasan
<b>PARISH</b>	Roscommon
<b>BARONY</b>	Ballintober South
<b>I.T.M.</b>	587173,764470
<b>CLASSIFICATION</b>	Prison
<b>DIST. FROM DEVELOPMENT</b>	48m east
<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	A new jail was commissioned in 1814 to replace the 18th century building (RO039-043013-) and had been built by 1824 (Weld 1832, 413-4) to a design by Sir Richard Morrison (1767-1849). The prison was closed in 1886 and partly re-opened in 1887 as an RIC barracks. It was disused from 1921 to 1925 when the Gardaí took it over until 1948 when it was largely demolished. Excavation (03E1245) revealed some walls and surfaces from the prison era (O'Hara 2006)
<b>REFERENCE</b>	www.archaeology.ie/ SMR file

<b>SMR NO.</b>	RO039-043012
<b>RMP STATUS</b>	Scheduled for inclusion in the next revision of the RMP
<b>TOWNLAND</b>	Ardnagh
<b>PARISH</b>	Roscommon
<b>BARONY</b>	Ballintober South
<b>I.T.M.</b>	587351,764599
<b>CLASSIFICATION</b>	Architectural fragment
<b>DIST. FROM DEVELOPMENT</b>	48m east
<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	Two carved fragments of a 17th-century doorway are attached to a gate beside the Old Presbyterian Church, now the Roscommon County Museum. (Higgins 1992)
<b>REFERENCE</b>	www.archaeology.ie/ SMR file

<b>SMR NO.</b>	RO039-043026
<b>RMP STATUS</b>	Scheduled for inclusion in the next revision of the RMP
<b>TOWNLAND</b>	Ardnanagh
<b>PARISH</b>	Roscommon
<b>BARONY</b>	Ballintober South
<b>I.T.M.</b>	587051,764111
<b>CLASSIFICATION</b>	Burial
<b>DIST. FROM DEVELOPMENT</b>	60m south
<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	Archaeological monitoring and testing (E001030) by Nial O'Neill during 2010 recovered the remains of a young male oriented E-W that produced a calibrated C14 date of AD 1016-1153. (Maddigan 2011, 9; MacLeod 2013)
<b>REFERENCE</b>	<a href="http://www.archaeology.ie/">www.archaeology.ie/</a> SMR file

<b>SMR NO.</b>	RO039-043015
<b>RMP STATUS</b>	Scheduled for inclusion in the next revision of the RMP
<b>TOWNLAND</b>	Ballypheasan
<b>PARISH</b>	Roscommon
<b>BARONY</b>	Ballintober South
<b>I.T.M.</b>	587395,764606
<b>CLASSIFICATION</b>	Market-house
<b>DIST. FROM DEVELOPMENT</b>	61m east
<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	A map of Roscommon town by Nicholas Malby c. 1580 shows the town house and market place, and a map of 1736 by Francis Plunket shows the market house as a small building with a domed roof in the market place. The building had collapsed in 1719 (Gacquin 2006), but it was rebuilt after 1762 by George and John Ensor as a rectangular and arcaded tholsel of six bays by three bays with the session rooms of the Grand Jury overhead. In 1836 it became the Roman Catholic church and was re-designed by J. O'Farrell who turned it into a one storey building, built up the arcades, expanded the porch with a tower and cupola overhead, and added a sacristy at N. This work was completed by 1844 and the building continued as a church until 1903 when the church of the Sacred Heart, designed by Walter Doolin, was opened. Throughout the 20th century the old Session House served as a hall, called the Harrison Hall after a popular physician. In the late 1970s it was sold to the Bank of Ireland who opened it as a branch in 1980. (Siggins 1998b).
<b>REFERENCE</b>	<a href="http://www.archaeology.ie/">www.archaeology.ie/</a> SMR file

## **APPENDIX 2 LEGISLATION PROTECTING THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCE**

### **PROTECTION OF CULTURAL HERITAGE**

The cultural heritage in Ireland is safeguarded through national and international policy designed to secure the protection of the cultural heritage resource to the fullest possible extent (Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands 1999, 35). This is undertaken in accordance with the provisions of the *European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage* (Valletta Convention), ratified by Ireland in 1997.

### **THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCE**

The *National Monuments Act 1930 to 2014* and relevant provisions of the *National Cultural Institutions Act 1997* are the primary means of ensuring the satisfactory protection of archaeological remains, which includes all man-made structures of whatever form or date except buildings habitually used for ecclesiastical purposes. A National Monument is described as 'a monument or the remains of a monument the preservation of which is a matter of national importance by reason of the historical, architectural, traditional, artistic or archaeological interest attaching thereto' (National Monuments Act 1930 Section 2). A number of mechanisms under the National Monuments Act are applied to secure the protection of archaeological monuments. These include the Register of Historic Monuments, the Record of Monuments and Places, and the placing of Preservation Orders and Temporary Preservation Orders on endangered sites.

### **OWNERSHIP AND GUARDIANSHIP OF NATIONAL MONUMENTS**

The Minister may acquire national monuments by agreement or by compulsory order. The state or local authority may assume guardianship of any national monument (other than dwellings). The owners of national monuments (other than dwellings) may also appoint the Minister or the local authority as guardian of that monument if the state or local authority agrees. Once the site is in ownership or guardianship of the state, it may not be interfered with without the written consent of the Minister.

### **REGISTER OF HISTORIC MONUMENTS**

Section 5 of the 1987 Act requires the Minister to establish and maintain a Register of Historic Monuments. Historic monuments and archaeological areas present on the register are afforded statutory protection under the 1987 Act. Any interference with sites recorded on the register is illegal without the permission of the Minister. Two months' notice in writing is required prior to any work being undertaken on or in the vicinity of a registered monument. The register also includes sites under Preservation Orders and Temporary Preservation Orders. All registered monuments are included in the Record of Monuments and Places.

### **PRESERVATION ORDERS AND TEMPORARY PRESERVATION ORDERS**

Sites deemed to be in danger of injury or destruction can be allocated Preservation Orders under the 1930 Act. Preservation Orders make any interference with the site

illegal. Temporary Preservation Orders can be attached under the 1954 Act. These perform the same function as a Preservation Order but have a time limit of six months, after which the situation must be reviewed. Work may only be undertaken on or in the vicinity of sites under Preservation Orders with the written consent, and at the discretion, of the Minister.

### **RECORD OF MONUMENTS AND PLACES**

Section 12(1) of the 1994 Act requires the Minister for Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands (now the Minister for the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage) to establish and maintain a record of monuments and places where the Minister believes that such monuments exist. The record comprises a list of monuments and relevant places and a map/s showing each monument and relevant place in respect of each county in the state. All sites recorded on the Record of Monuments and Places receive statutory protection under the National Monuments Act 1994. All recorded monuments on the proposed development site are represented on the accompanying maps.

Section 12(3) of the 1994 Act provides that ‘where the owner or occupier (other than the Minister for Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands) of a monument or place included in the Record, or any other person, proposes to carry out, or to cause or permit the carrying out of, any work at or in relation to such a monument or place, he or she shall give notice in writing to the Minister of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands to carry out work and shall not, except in case of urgent necessity and with the consent of the Minister, commence the work until two months after giving of notice’.

Under the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 2004, anyone who demolishes or in any way interferes with a recorded site is liable to a fine not exceeding €3,000 or imprisonment for up to 6 months. On summary conviction and on conviction of indictment, a fine not exceeding €10,000 or imprisonment for up to 5 years is the penalty. In addition, they are liable for costs for the repair of the damage caused.

In addition to this, under the *European Communities (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 1989*, Environmental Impact Statements (EIS) are required for various classes and sizes of development project to assess the impact the proposed development will have on the existing environment, which includes the cultural, archaeological and built heritage resources. These document’s recommendations are typically incorporated into the conditions under which the proposed development must proceed, and thus offer an additional layer of protection for monuments which have not been listed on the RMP.

### **THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT ACT 2000**

Under planning legislation, each local authority is obliged to draw up a Development Plan setting out their aims and policies with regard to the growth of the area over a five-year period. They cover a range of issues including archaeology and built heritage, setting out their policies and objectives with regard to the protection and enhancement of both. These policies can vary from county to county. The Planning and Development Act 2000 recognises that proper planning and sustainable

development includes the protection of the archaeological heritage. Conditions relating to archaeology may be attached to individual planning permissions.

### **Roscommon County Development Plan (2022-2028)**

It is a policy objective of Roscommon County Council to:

#### **BH 9.13**

Secure the preservation (i.e. preservation in situ or, as a minimum, preservation by record) of all archaeological monuments included in the Record of Monuments and Places as established under Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act, 1994, and of sites, features and objects of archaeological interest generally. In securing such preservation Roscommon County Council will have regard to the advice and recommendations of the National Monuments Section of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

#### **BH 9.14**

To support the Rathcroghan Archaeological Complex, as a historic landscape with viable land-use practices and a viable population, by continuing to support initiatives such as the Farming Rathcroghan European Innovation Partnership and the Royal Sites of Ireland application to Ireland's World Heritage Tentative List and progression to designation of the Royal Sites of Ireland as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

### **Roscommon Town Local Area Plan (2014-2020)**

It is a policy of the plan to;

**Policy 66** Identify, protect and conserve structures (i.e. includes conservation, preservation, and improvement compatible with maintaining the character and interest of the structure), or parts of structures, which are of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest or which are listed on the Record of Protected Structures or are located within the Roscommon Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs).

**Policy 67** Promote the protection and conservation of Buildings and Features of Interest identified in this Plan as they contribute to the character of the town.

**Policy 68** Protect and preserve the archaeological sites identified on the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP), those yet unknown and those discovered since the publication of the Record of Monuments and Places (1998).

**Policy 69** Seek archaeological assessment and, where appropriate, excavation and testing, preservation by record or preservation in situ, in relation to all development proposals on which the archaeological heritage may be affected.

**Policy 70** Protect the integrity, quality and context of significant sites and recorded monuments.

It is an objective of the plan to;

**Objective 68** Promote pride and awareness of the importance and value of Roscommon town's architectural and archaeological heritage, and manage any change to that heritage in such a way as to retain its character and special interest.

**Objective 77** Review and implement the County Roscommon Heritage Plan as it relates to the LAP area.

**Objective 78** Provide guidance to developers and property owners regarding the protection of the archaeological heritage and the archaeological implications of proposed development.

## **APPENDIX 3 IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND THE CULTURAL HERITAGE RESOURCE**

### **POTENTIAL IMPACTS ON ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL REMAINS**

Impacts are defined as ‘the degree of change in an environment resulting from a development’ (Environmental Protection Agency 2022). They are described as profound, significant or slight impacts on archaeological remains. They may be negative, positive or neutral, direct, indirect or cumulative, temporary or permanent.

Impacts can be identified from detailed information about a project, the nature of the area affected and the range of archaeological and historical resources potentially affected. Development can affect the archaeological and historical resource of a given landscape in a number of ways.

- Permanent and temporary land-take, associated structures, landscape mounding, and their construction may result in damage to or loss of archaeological remains and deposits, or physical loss to the setting of historic monuments and to the physical coherence of the landscape.
- Archaeological sites can be affected adversely in a number of ways: disturbance by excavation, topsoil stripping and the passage of heavy machinery; disturbance by vehicles working in unsuitable conditions; or burial of sites, limiting accessibility for future archaeological investigation.
- Hydrological changes in groundwater or surface water levels can result from construction activities such as de-watering and spoil disposal, or longer-term changes in drainage patterns. These may desiccate archaeological remains and associated deposits.
- Visual impacts on the historic landscape sometimes arise from construction traffic and facilities, built earthworks and structures, landscape mounding and planting, noise, fences and associated works. These features can impinge directly on historic monuments and historic landscape elements as well as their visual amenity value.
- Landscape measures such as tree planting can damage sub-surface archaeological features, due to topsoil stripping and through the root action of trees and shrubs as they grow.
- Ground consolidation by construction activities or the weight of permanent embankments can cause damage to buried archaeological remains, especially in colluviums or peat deposits.
- Disruption due to construction also offers in general the potential for adversely affecting archaeological remains. This can include machinery, site offices, and service trenches.



*Although not widely appreciated, positive impacts can accrue from developments. These can include positive resource management policies, improved maintenance and access to archaeological monuments, and the increased level of knowledge of a site or historic landscape as a result of archaeological assessment and fieldwork.*

### **PREDICTED IMPACTS**

The severity of a given level of land-take or visual intrusion varies with the type of monument, site or landscape features and its existing environment. Severity of impact can be judged taking the following into account:

- The proportion of the feature affected and how far physical characteristics fundamental to the understanding of the feature would be lost;
- Consideration of the type, date, survival/condition, fragility/vulnerability, rarity, potential and amenity value of the feature affected;
- Assessment of the levels of noise, visual and hydrological impacts, either in general or site-specific terms, as may be provided by other specialists.

## **APPENDIX 4 MITIGATION MEASURES AND THE CULTURAL HERITAGE RESOURCE**

### **POTENTIAL MITIGATION STRATEGIES FOR CULTURAL HERITAGE REMAINS**

Mitigation is defined as features of the design or other measures of the proposed development that can be adopted to avoid, prevent, reduce or offset negative effects.

The best opportunities for avoiding damage to archaeological remains or intrusion on their setting and amenity arise when the site options for the development are being considered. Damage to the archaeological resource immediately adjacent to developments may be prevented by the selection of appropriate construction methods. Reducing adverse effects can be achieved by good design, for example by screening historic buildings or upstanding archaeological monuments or by burying archaeological sites undisturbed rather than destroying them. Offsetting adverse effects is probably best illustrated by the full investigation and recording of archaeological sites that cannot be preserved *in situ*.

### **DEFINITION OF MITIGATION STRATEGIES**

#### **ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCE**

The ideal mitigation for all archaeological sites is preservation *in situ*. This is not always a practical solution, however. Therefore, a series of recommendations are offered to provide ameliorative measures where avoidance and preservation *in situ* are not possible.

*Archaeological Test Trenching* can be defined as ‘a limited programme of intrusive fieldwork which determines the presence or absence of archaeological features, structures, deposits, artefacts or ecofacts within a specified area or site on land, inter-tidal zone or underwater. If such archaeological remains are present field evaluation defines their character, extent, quality and preservation, and enables an assessment of their worth in a local, regional, national or international context as appropriate’ (ClfA 2020a).

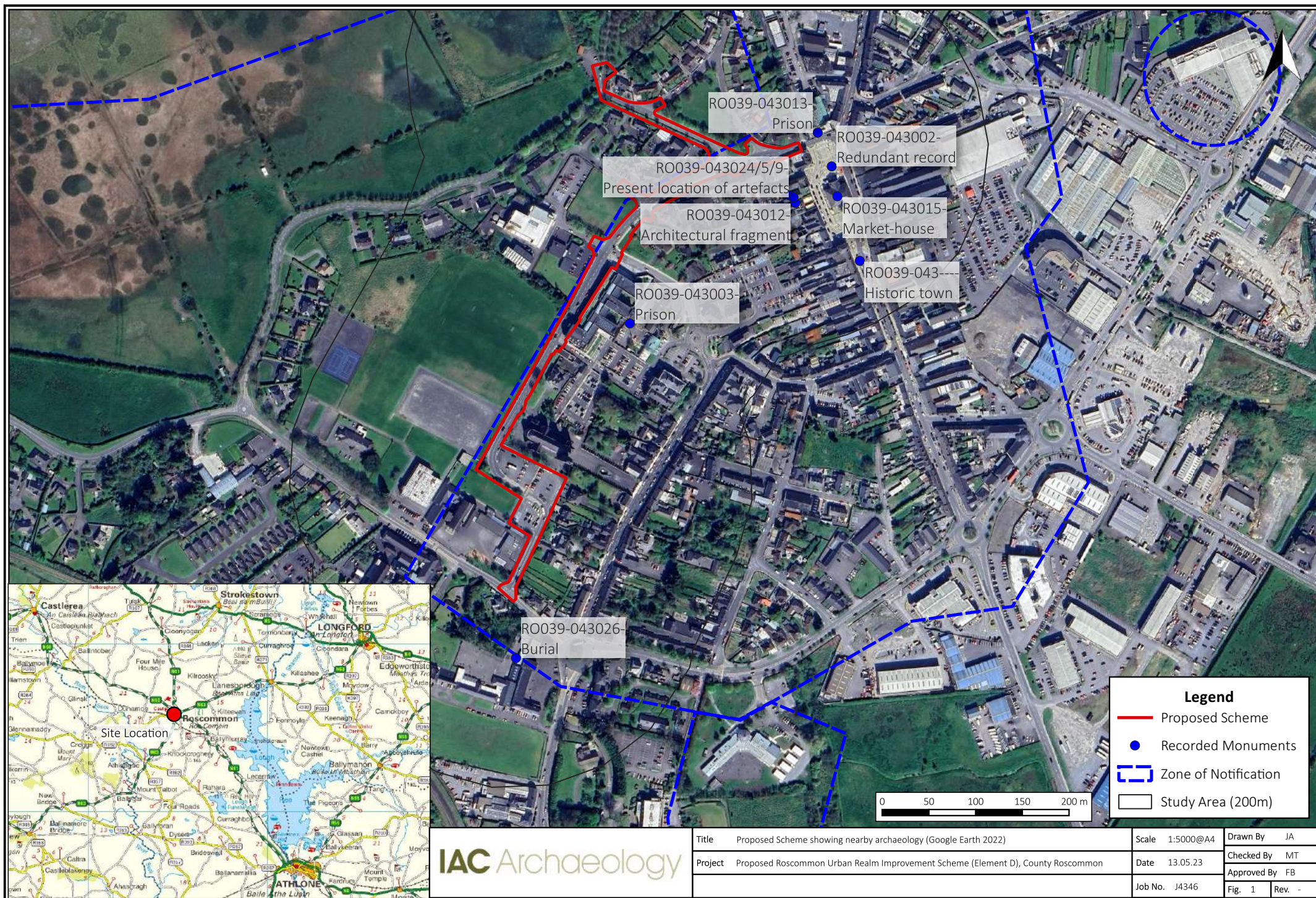
*Full Archaeological Excavation* can be defined as ‘a programme of controlled, intrusive fieldwork with defined research objectives which examines, records and interprets archaeological deposits, features and structures and, as appropriate, retrieves artefacts, ecofacts and other remains within a specified area or site on land, inter-tidal zone or underwater. The records made and objects gathered during fieldwork are studied and the results of that study published in detail appropriate to the project design’ (ClfA 2020b).

*Archaeological Monitoring* can be defined as ‘a formal programme of observation and investigation conducted during any operation carried out for non-archaeological reasons. This will be within a specified area or site on land, inter-tidal zone or underwater, where there is a possibility that archaeological deposits may be

disturbed or destroyed. The programme will result in the preparation of a report and ordered archive (ClfA 2020c).

*Underwater Archaeological Assessment* consists of a programme of works carried out by a specialist underwater archaeologist, which can involve wade surveys, metal detection surveys and the excavation of test pits within the sea or riverbed. These assessments are able to access and assess the potential of an underwater environment to a much higher degree than terrestrial based assessments.







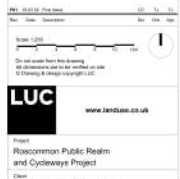


**IAC Archaeology**

Title	Plan of proposed scheme (1 of 3)	Scale	NTS	Drawn By	JA
Project	Proposed Roscommon Urban Realm Improvement Scheme (Element D), County Roscommon	Date	13.05.24	Checked By	MT
		Job No.	J4346	Approved By	FB
				Fig.	2a
				Rev.	-

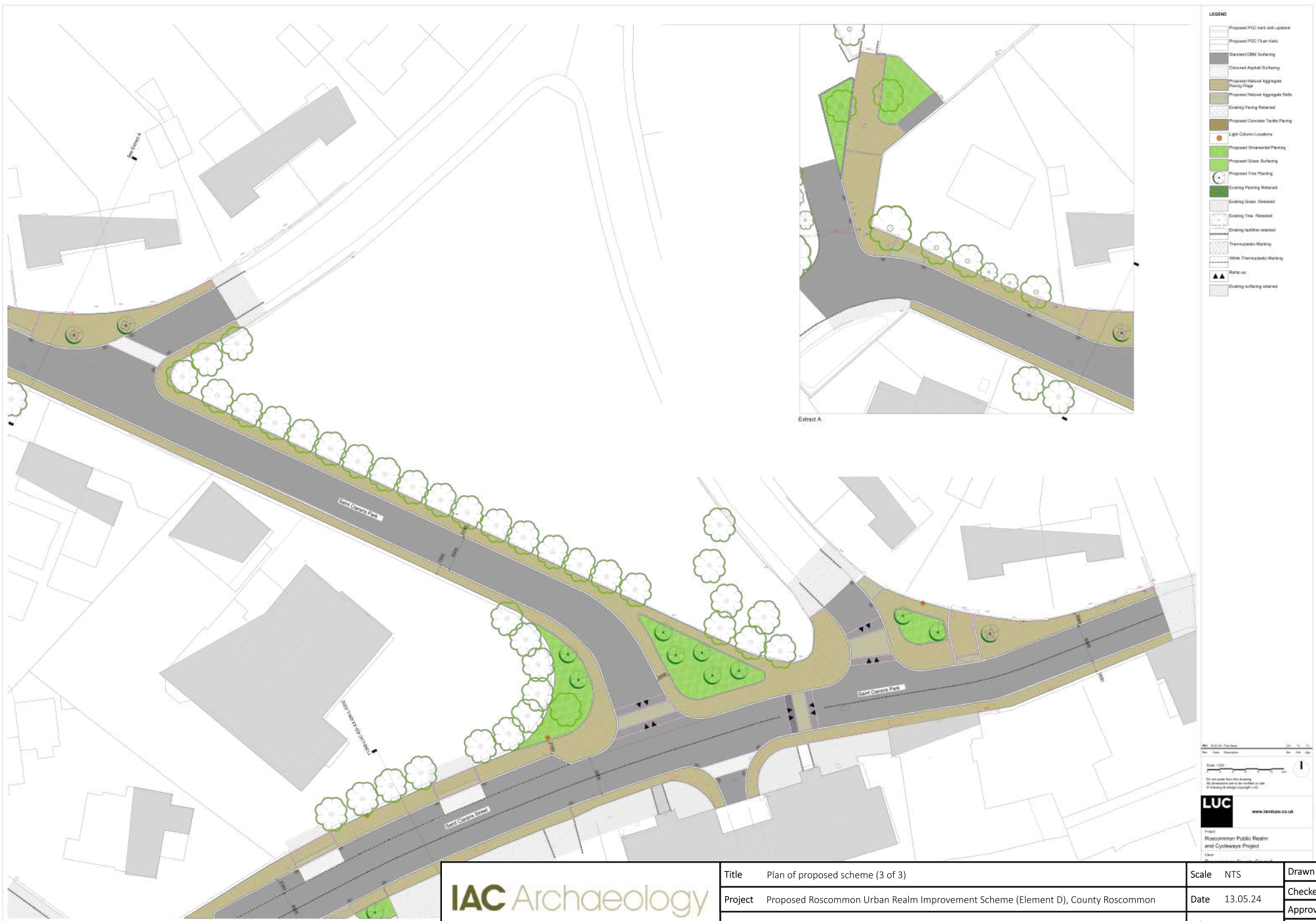


- LEGEND**
- Proposed PCC kerb with upstand
  - Proposed PCC kerb down
  - Standard C&G Surfacing
  - Coloured Asphalt Surfacing
  - Proposed Natural Aggregate Paving Path
  - Proposed Natural Aggregate Setts
  - Existing Paving Retained
  - Proposed Concrete Tactile Paving
  - Light Column Location
  - Proposed Ornamental Planting
  - Proposed Green Surfacing
  - Proposed Tree Planting
  - Existing Paving Retained
  - Existing Grass Retained
  - Existing Tree Retained
  - Existing kerbline retained
  - Thermoplastic Marking
  - White Thermoplastic Marking
  - Range Up
  - Existing surfacing retained



**IAC Archaeology**

Title	Plan of proposed scheme (2 of 3)	Scale	NTS	Drawn By	JA
Project	Proposed Roscommon Urban Realm Improvement Scheme (Element D), County Roscommon	Date	13.05.24	Checked By	MT
		Job No.	J4346	Approved By	FB
				Fig.	2b
				Rev.	-



**IAC Archaeology**

Title	Plan of proposed scheme (3 of 3)	Scale	NTS	Drawn By	JA
Project	Proposed Roscommon Urban Realm Improvement Scheme (Element D), County Roscommon	Date	13.05.24	Checked By	MT
		Job No.	J4346	Approved By	FB
				Fig.	2c
				Rev.	-



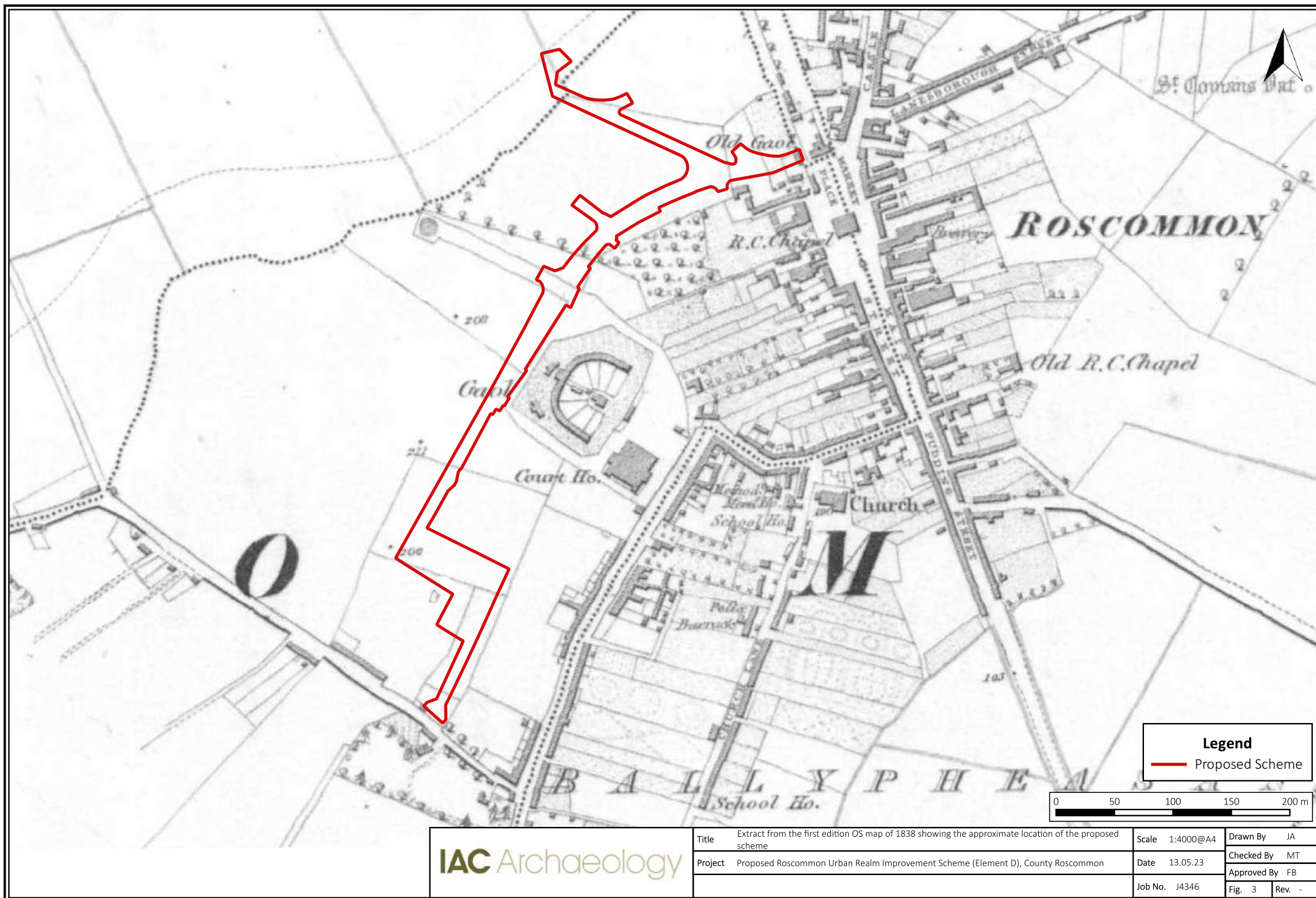










Plate 1: St. Ciaran's Street, facing south



Plate 2: Car park, facing northwest



Plate 3: Second car park, facing northeast



Plate 4: St. Ciaran's Street, adjacent to churchyard, facing north



Plate 5: St. Ciaran's Street and Roscommon County Council building, facing south



Plate 6: Lough Road, facing west